

Lesson Five: The Great Commission and Acts 2

Jesus gives his disciples the Great Commission just before He ascends back to heaven. There are three different versions given:

Matthew 28:19-20 “**Go** therefore and **make disciples** of all the nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 **teaching them** to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Mark 16:15-16 And he said to them, “**Go** into all the world and **preach the gospel** to every creature. 16 He that **believes** and is **baptized** shall be **saved** and he that disbelieves shall be condemned.”

Luke 24:46-49 And He said to them, “Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day 47 and that **repentance for forgiveness of sins** should be **proclaimed** in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

Three different versions—what does that mean?

If there is any confusion about what the Great Commission means, the matter is settled by the next book in the New Testament.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

The title of the book which follows the four gospels tells us what is in it.

Acts tells the story of what the apostles did in the 30 years following the crucifixion and resurrection. The chief work of the Apostles was to carry out the Great Commission. Many times in the book of Acts you have an apostle preaching to lost people telling them what to do to be saved. We can watch and listen to everything that happens in each conversion story. We can see how the Apostles interpreted the Great Commission.

Who are the Apostles? The men to whom Jesus made the special promise in John 16:12-15.

When did the Apostles finally receive the promise of the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:1-4

What does that mean? From that point on the disciples/apostles were being guided by the Holy Spirit into all the truth. Although the apostles were only men and therefore fallible and sinners themselves, in all matters pertaining the kingdom of God they were being guided by the Holy Spirit to say and do the things that we read in the book of Acts.

ACTS 2, THE DAY OF PENTECOST

Pentecost was the name of the Jewish feast that came 50 days after Passover. Jews from all over the world would come to Jerusalem for the celebration of both holy days. The first Pentecost after Jesus was crucified the apostles received the Holy Spirit. This is the very first time the gospel of Christ is publicly preached to lost people. Three thousand lost people hear the gospel and are saved on this day.

2:1-4 Who was together in one place?

What were the three signs that the Spirit had come?

2:5-8 Why were Jews from all over the world in Jerusalem?

“Tongues” of the Holy Spirit were _____ spoken somewhere in the world.

Were these “tongues” necessary for communication?

Did the crowd recognize the miraculous nature of the tongues?

2:9-13 How many nations are actually represented in Jerusalem at Pentecost?

What is a “proselyte” (2:10)?

Who were the people who thought the apostles were drunk?

2:14-21 Who is the spokesman for the rest of the apostles?

Why was it unlikely that the disciples would be drunk?

What was Peter’s explanation for what was really happening?

Look at the elements of the prophecy from Joel 2:28-32 quoted by Peter in Acts 2:17-21.

The beginning of the Last Days 2:17-18

The Last Days began at Pentecost, 33 AD +/-

A pouring out of the Spirit on all flesh

A time of visions, dreams, prophecy

The end of the Last Days 2:19-20

The great and awesome day of the Lord

Miraculous signs in the heaven and on earth

Throughout the Last Days 2:21

Whoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Peter's Sermon to the Pentecost Crowd 2:22-36.

2:22-24 Jesus whom you crucified is raised up from the dead.

2:25-32 The prophetic statement of Psalm 16:8-11 shows that a descendant of David would be resurrected.

2:33-35 David's Lord would sit at the right hand of the Father.

2:36 The main point of the sermon: Jesus is the Christ, and He is Lord.

Christ = Greek word for "Anointed One" = Hebrew word Messiah.

The Jewish Expectation for the Christ or Messiah

Lord = normally "master" but in this context = Divine Master

The Jews of Jesus day refused to confess Caesar as Lord.
The meaning of that confession was that Ceasar was divine.
No Jew would ever confess that a man was divine/Lord.
The only nation in the Roman Empire given an exemption.

Reasons why devout Jews would reject Jesus as Christ or Lord.

He had no army or political power. Therefore he was not the Christ

He was a flesh and blood person and therefore not divine.

He was crucified on a cross and therefore under the curse of God.
See Deuteronomy 21: 22-23 and Galatians 3:13

2:37 The Response of the Crowd to Peter's Sermon

Cut to the heart

Belief

Fear and Despair

2:38 Peter's Answer under the guidance of the Holy Spirit

Repent—literally, a change of mind/heart
In practical terms, a change of direction

Be baptized—
Baptism is a Greek word, that has not been translated.
If translated, this verse would read: Be immersed or dipped in the ...

Every one of you—no exceptions

In the name of the Jesus Christ

Baptism as a ritual predates the time of Jesus, but this is the first instance of baptism in His name.

For the forgiveness or remission of sins—why a person repents and is baptized

The Gift of the Holy Spirit—When a person is saved, they receive the Holy Spirit.

2:39 Peter’s Answer Continues

To whom is this promise being made?

2:40-41 What Happened Next?

Peter preached some more

That day 3000 devout Jews confessed their faith in Jesus and were baptized.

SOME QUESTIONS THAT NEED TO BE ASKED?

1. Are Peter and the rest of the apostles being guided by the Holy Spirit in what they are saying and doing in Acts 2?
2. Are Peter and the rest of the apostles following the commands of Jesus given in the the Great Commission?
3. How did the 3000 people who were saved in Acts 2 “call upon the name of the Lord”? See Acts 2:21
4. Is the conversion of the 3000 in Acts 2 different from the conversion of the thief on the cross beside of Jesus (Luke 23:39-43)? What does that mean to us?

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CONVERSION OF THE 3000 IN ACTS 2

The Good News of Jesus Christ is preached to the LOST.

The crowd hears the gospel and some believe it. They are cut to the heart.

They want to know what to do.

Peter tells them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

That day 3000 devout Jews repent and are baptized.

They receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit:

They are now SAVED.

2:42 How these new Christians strengthened themselves in their faith

Apostles doctrine (teaching)

Fellowship

Breaking of bread

Prayer